

not have coverage and the other cuts that we're looking at. You may not like this tax increase, most likely you don't. I don't like the tax increase. I don't think any of us do like tax increases. People get mad at us. People send us cards and it's an unpleasant thing to have to do. But when you sort through the choices it seems to me that you want to keep your options open. As we go forward on the budget, as we consider the follow-up budget, as we consider the Medicaid situation again, as we look down the road in the next few days, not advancing the bill, not having it sit over there for us to consider when all the cards have to be laid on the table doesn't make a lot of sense. I think we need to advance the bill, understand its importance in the overall package of issues that we have to face. That when you talk to people and you say, look, we've got a budget problem, we're short of money, what do you think we ought to do, again, the polls will come back time and time again, raise the alcohol tax, raise the cigarette tax. There are good reasons for that. A lot of the reason that we need this money is to pay for Medicaid. One of the rising costs of Medicaid are in mental health and alcohol programs that are under Medicaid. Now I would like to, Senator Hall would like to send this money into additional programs. We can't afford that luxury. We're going to have to just put this money back in to keep our head above water, to keep us afloat with the cost increases of Medicaid and other things that are facing us in the budget. But clearly the demand is there, I think a legitimate demand. And if there's a legitimate reason for raising the alcohol tax, I think the public is supportive despite the cards you're getting, despite the lobbyists that you talk to. I think you'll find that when you go back to the public and you say, look, this tax makes sense in light of the budget situation, in light of our other options, I think they'll agree with you. With that I again as you, please, support the advancement of the bill.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. You've heard the closing on the advancement of LB 741 and a roll call vote has been requested on the advancement. Please keep your conversations down so the Clerk may hear your responses. Mr. Clerk, call the roll.

CLERK: (Roll call vote taken. See pages 2473-74 of the Legislative Journal.) 24 ayes, 20 nays on the advancement.

SPEAKER BAACK: LB 741 fails to advance. The call is raised.